

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1046

By Travis

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Senator Gene Elsea of Rhea County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Senator Gene Elsea, an icon of Tennessee politics who donated fourteen years of his life to the people of Tennessee through service in the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Gene Elsea served with courage, conviction, and compassion as a member of the Senate during the 97th through 102nd General Assemblies and as a member of the House of Representatives during the 93rd General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, during his three terms and twelve years in the Senate and one term in the House, he was prominent as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always voted his conscience, regardless of the consequences; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gene Elsea was a dynamic and aggressive participant in the legislative process and earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues for his outstanding contributions as a member of various Senate and joint committees, including the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee, Senate Commerce, Labor and Agriculture Committee, Joint Education Oversight Committee, Joint Children and Youth Oversight Committee, Joint Corrections Oversight Committee, Joint Workers Compensation Oversight Committee, and Joint Business Tax Study Committee; and

WHEREAS, Senator Elsea represented his party as the Republican Caucus Chairman during the 99th through 101st General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, among his many legislative accomplishments, Senator Elsea was most proud of securing state funding to extend water utilities to most of Rhea County, to build two

bridges across the Tennessee River, and to widen U.S. Highway 27 between I-24 in Chattanooga and I-40 in Harriman; and

WHEREAS, Senator Elsea was also very proud of securing state funding for the construction of a new health department building through a cooperative agreement between Rhea County and the City of Dayton; in recognition of his significant contributions to the project, the county named the new health department building in his honor; and

WHEREAS, for his unparalleled devotion to public service and his constituents, Gene Elsea received numerous awards and honors; he was recognized as the 2001 State Senator of the Year by the Upper Cumberland Development District for his tireless advocacy in support of the Upper Cumberland region; and

WHEREAS, Gene Elsea is survived by his wife, Claudette Henley Elsea; three children and their spouses, Kim and Joe Hawley, Terry Elsea, and Chris and Jimmy Barnes; and grandchildren, Jameson, Chelsea, Alexander, Chandler, and Chesney; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gene Elsea was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities. He served with acumen and alacrity in all of the roles he filled and the positions he occupied, and he earned the respect of his peers, proponents and opponents alike, for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, Senator Elsea leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should remember our colleague, Gene Elsea, an exceptional public servant, human being, and friend of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory and bountiful life of Senator Gene Elsea, reflecting fondly upon his indelible legacy of effective public service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend our sympathy and express our condolences to the family and many friends of Senator Elsea.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.